

LOADSTAR LETTER

64

"The C-64 with a 20 MHz Super-CPU actually seems faster than my 40 MHz Amiga because the C-64 is such an efficient platform..."

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LS LETTER Sails Alone

by Jeff Jones. One of our readers told me last week that The Underground was the best C= Mag going. I have to admit that I always liked it, and I liked Scott's style. Perhaps he can fill the void that some people say exists in the LOADSTAR newsletter.

Who woulda' ever thunk it? I never felt like I edited a newsletter until now. The LOADSTAR LETTER is no longer a freebie, but a commodity. Don't look for us listed on NASDAQ or NYSE, but we hope to make some kind of dent in history, even if it's "mere" 8-bit history.

One thing I promised you more of was GEOS columns, and they begin, starting with this issue, and become more basic starting next issue. By all

means write me with questions — even GEOS questions, and I'll try to answer them.

Since I do the LOADSTAR LETTER at home, I prefer Email to Jeff@LOADSTAR.com and egglest1@cougarnet.byu.edu but if you don't have an Email account, make sure to mark your letters to:

LOADSTAR LETTER
606 Common Street
Shreveport LA 71101

Plan for the LOADSTAR LETTER to become more robust. Plan for more, more, more Commodore basics and the sprinkling of technical, Internet, and zany. I also hope to add more pages *very soon*.

I'd like to run a

LOADSTAR LETTER reader of the month every month, so send in your photos! 📷

C=Hacking Mag Officially Rides LOADSTAR 3.5-Inch Disks

by Jeff Jones. Jim Brain Emailed me last month to let me know that he would like LOADSTAR to begin distributing C=Hacking Mag on its issues. Until now we haven't been doing it officially, and haven't kept track of which issues we may have missed. From now on we won't miss an issue and will supply the programs *uudecoded!* 📷

Scott Eggleston Speaks

by Scott Eggleston. Greetings LOADSTAR Letterheads! Yep, I'm the new Associate Editor of the LOADSTAR Letter. Be afraid, be very afraid! I used to be the publisher of the Underground, an independent Commodore magazine I published for the past two-and-a-half years.

Truth be told, I was very flattered when Jeff contacted me about working with him on a new and improved LOADSTAR LETTER. I told him that I felt his writing was 100 times better than mine, and would be humbled having my stuff printed next to his. He said not to worry, that his work

was only 50 times better.

Jokes aside, Jeff did let me know that he saw no sign of burnout in my work, which helped my considerations for Associate Editor. When you write and compile two-thirds of a magazine as well as publish it, it can make you quite weary,

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Jim Butterfield Answers Urban Legend

The following tidbits of interest were found on the Internet and saved to my hard drive for one reason or another.

Subject: WAIT6502,x Follow-up
Date: Mon, 29 Jul 1996 19:22:32
From: Eyeth@gnn.com (Todd Elliott)
Organization: GNN
Newsgroups: comp.sys.cbm

I've recently asked Mr. Butterfield about the infamous WAIT6502,x command used in early PETs. His response follows, in which I think gives a definitive answer to the WAIT6502,x question.

Of course, I'm still looking for any legal information involving CBM. Todd

I hope you don't mind if I ask you a question about WAIT6502,X used in early PETs? I was hoping a PET guru like you may be able to answer the true story. The story I've heard is that CBM contracted with Microsoft to build the ML code for BASIC.

True. They paid a flat fee for unlimited usage. Microsoft thought that was a great deal .. until, later, they made royalty deals.

However, Microsoft fell substantially short, and CBM's own engineers reprogrammed and finished up the BASIC for the CBM PETs.

Not true of that time frame. Commodore paid Microsoft an additional fee to write a revision to the original Basic that they had bought. Among other things, spaces-in-keywords were changed, zero page shifted around, and (unknown to Commodore) the WAIT 6502,x joke was inserted.

As it happened, I was the person to show this WAIT feature to Len Tramiel of Commodore engineering. He was furious at Microsoft: "We're very short of ROM memory, and they do THAT do us!"

All subsequent revisions of Basic were done by Commodore personnel.

CBM marketed their BASIC as their own work, much to the chagrin of Microsoft.

As an afterthought, Microsoft

would have liked to see their name come up on the screen. But it wasn't in the contract (and Apple, later, introduced "Applesoft Basic", another Microsoft rename.

Microsoft subsequently become quite fussy about disclosure. Commodore was enjoined to never reveal a single byte of the Basic interpreter code (and Commodore employees were so cautioned on many occasions). But the user groups sorted most of that out.

A lawsuit ensued, and in court, Bill Gates typed in that command, where X equals the amount of times MICROSOFT! would show up onscreen. Needless to say, CBM lost the case and had paid royalties to Microsoft since.

Could have been a nice reason for putting in the code, but it didn't happen.

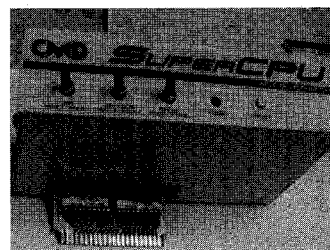
Is this true? If so, can you give me an idea of where the lawsuit was in? Canada?

(Continued on page 6)

The SuperCPU Finally Shipping

by Jeff Jones. This is not a drill, and I don't work for CMD. The final version of the SuperCPU is just like the RAMLink: The impossible working like clockwork. When I compare CMD's SuperCPU to the 4 MHz TurboMaster, it's more than just five times faster. It also *works*. I hardly ever had the TurboMaster installed because it placed too many garbage characters on my C-64, and on the 128 in 64 mode, it was just unusable.

I have a lot of faith in CMD because I knew they were persnickety. It's not enough that the SuperCPU works on a C-64, it has to work on every system imaginable. For some companies, CMD's beta unit would have been considered a final product, but that wasn't enough for them. Indeed the final holdup in shipment was because CMD found that Commodore used improper components in *some* C-64Cs which caused timing to



go out of spec after the computer warmed up. They couldn't ship until they locked that problem down.

Congratulations to CMD on a job well done. Buy it and re-discover your Commodore.



Joke Digest Material
(see page 4 for details on how to subscribe)

STUPID-CRIMINAL HALL OF SHAME

Every day, we are assaulted by stories of stupid people--many of whom use their stupidity for personal gain. From time to time, though, we hear of those who strive to achieve new levels of stupidity *while* also breaking the law. To these brave men and women--ooops, "women and men"--we present the highest possible honor: entry into the Stupid-Criminal Hall of Shame."

Following are their accounts ...

Kentucky: Two men tried to pull the front off a cash machine by running a chain from the machine to the bumper of their pickup truck. Instead of pulling the front panel off the machine, though, they pulled the bumper off their truck. Scared, they left the scene and drove home. With the chain still attached to the machine. With their bumper still attached to the chain. With their vehicle's license plate still attached to the bumper.

South Carolina: A man walked into a local police station, dropped a bag of cocaine on the counter, informed the desk sergeant that it was substandard cut, and asked that the person who sold it to him be arrested immediately.

Indiana: A man walked up to a cashier at a grocery store and demanded all the money in the register. When the cashier handed him the loot, he fled--leaving his wallet on the counter.

England: A German "tourist," supposedly on a golf holiday, showed up at customs with his golf bag. While making idle chatter about golf, the customs official realized that the tourist did not know what a "handicap" was. The customs official asks the tourist to demonstrate his swing, which he does--backward! A substantial amount of narcotics were found in the golf bag.

Germany: Oil of Olay no longer turning the trick for her, a woman decided that she would bathe in the milk of a camel (a modern-day Cleopatra). So she stole a camel from the local zoo (where *else* can you find a camel when you need one?) and transported it back to her house--where she realized that the camel's name was "Otto."

Arizona: A company called "Guns For Hire" stages gun-fights for Western movies, etc. One day, they received a call from a 47-year-old woman who wanted to have her husband killed. She got 4-1/2 years in jail.

Texas: A man convicted of robbery worked out a deal to pay \$9600 in damages rather than serve a prison sentence. For payment, he provided the court a check--a "forged" check. He got 10 years.

(Location Unknown): A man went into a drug store, pulled a gun, announced a robbery, and pulled a Hefty-bag face mask over his head--and realized that he'd forgotten to cut eye-holes in the mask.

(Location Unknown): A man successfully broke into a bank

Getting GEOS To Work On The SuperCPU

by Jeff Jones with some excerpts from the SuperCPU manual. The speed of GEOS (or lack of it at times) is a strong argument for the SuperCPU. Out of the box, GEOS doesn't work with the SuperCPU, and visa versa, but patching the problem isn't difficult, and when you do, you'll find GEOS much more swift. It might even seem friendlier. Today I used geoGIF to convert an 89-block GIF file in seconds instead of minutes on an REU.

The SuperCPU comes with a disk that contains a program called SuperInstall which patches GEOS so that it operates with the SuperCPU. These patches apply only to GEOS version 2.0 or GEOS version 2.0r. My GEOS partition was created with MAVERICK so I have to poke 53770,0 before booting GEOS. Lucky for me, the Super install program told me that in plain English when it found that my GEOS setup was non-standard.

You'll need 17 blocks free on your GEOS boot disk. If your SuperCPU is enabled, set the SPEED switch to

NORMAL (1MHz).

Boot GEOS using either a standard GEOS boot disk, or a GEOS boot disk created with geoMakeBoot. NOTE: The patch seemed to work on my Maverick-created boot disk but I have to type poke53370,0 before booting

SuperInstall automatically selects the options necessary to modify your GEOS boot file and create the SUPERGEOS auto-exec file. It will also determine if you're using a CMD SmartMouse, and select the option to create the SuperSmart driver if you are. If you're using some other mouse, SuperInstall will instead default to the option that creates a Super1351 mouse driver. If you have only a joystick, no driver will be selected.

Once you've installed SuperGeos, which is quite painless (you literally can't mess up on this) make sure that SUPERGEOS is the first auto-exec on the disk, and if a Super mouse driver was installed, make sure it is the first input driver on the disk. If these files aren't the first of

their type, you can swap files manually to make sure that they are. If you don't know how to swap files, see 'Moving File Icons' in Chapter 3 of your GEOS manual. NOTE: Failure to make SUPERGEOS the first auto-exec may cause problems with the operation of GEOS.

The two Super mouse drivers have been specially designed to make mouse input devices operate smoothly at high speed. You may sometimes find that the speed of your enhanced system makes selecting items difficult. As a work-around, one of the mouse buttons has been programmed to switch TURBO off while the button is held down.

Due to the use of the GEOS Optimization mode built into the SuperCPU, GEOS applications are able to operate at a highly efficient speed. In addition, thanks to the expertise of GEOS programmer Maurice Randall, the provided GEOS patches deliver an extremely high level of compatibility. ☐

Getting GEOS To Work On A 1581, HD or CMD FD

by Jeff Jones. Today I converted one GIF in GEOS and the 1571 disk was so full that I could barely open the image once it was converted. As storage space goes, 170k/360k is not much room, especially for graphically intense files 1581 disks, with 800K, are a better medium for GEOS. With a 1581/HD/FD setup, GEOS 2.0 stands for "Gee, Everything Operates Smoothly."

Out of the box, GEOS

2.0 will recognize, read and write to a 1581 disk, though it will not boot from it because of GEOS' copy protection.

While GEOS 2.0 will read and write to a 1581 directory automatically, it doesn't support the 296 file entry capability so it may tell you your disk is full when you have plenty of disk space and file space.

I created a 1581 boot disk with *Maverick* version 4. *Maverick* 5 also performs this

task, but includes fast loaders written specifically for the 1581 that don't work with an HD, and perhaps FD. CMD sells *geoMakeBoot* for \$12.95, which de-protects GEOS and allows you to boot GEOS on an FD, 1581 or HD in a 1581 mode partition. They also sell *Gateway* for \$29.95, which transforms GEOS into a completely CMD-friendly critter. ☐

A Laptop for the Rest of Us

by Scott Eggleston. In a recent issue of *Commodore World*, there was a neat article about the 8-bit Commodore LCD laptop that never made it to production. It ran on AA batteries, was lightweight, and had an operating system (as well as cursor keys) similar to the Plus/4.

I want to discuss a line of portables that are very similar to the Commodore LCD, the only difference being they are very available to those who want to search them out.

Before I go any further, let me reassure you that I'm not talking about the SX-64, which should in no way be considered portable. Not only is there no way to power this monster while sitting on a bus (unless you want to carry a car battery on with you), but who would want to lug the thing to the bus stop? With a small monitor and 1541 disk drive built in, it weighs the same as a small walrus. Transportable, maybe, but portable, I don't think so.

The line of computers I'm referring to are most commonly called the Tandy portables from the early 80's which came in model numbers 100/102/200. There were also versions marketed in Japan (made by

NEC), as well as Europe (created by Olivetti). All of these are pretty similar, but be aware that they are all equally useful to the Commodore user with portable desires, and should be snatched up upon discovery.

If you've never seen one of these little beauties, they are approximately the size of an 8 1/2 x 11" piece of paper, only about two inches thick. They have full size keyboards and an easy to read LCD display. There are several ports of interest, and built-in ROM software as well. Let's look at each of these things a little closer, and their similarities to our favorite computer, the Commodore 64.

First, the screen is 8 lines by 40 columns. Anyone who has ever used a 64 will be used to this size display. The size of the letters makes for easy typing and editing--no squinting needed. The screen is also on the same plane as the keyboard, so there are no "lids" to open up, or damage. Why is this significant? Ever try sitting on a bus and open a laptop? You can't get the screen into a usable position before it hits the back of the seat in front of you. You'd have to crane your neck just to use the darn thing. Not so with the



Tandies. The screen is flat and easy to read.

The keyboard is nicely laid out, comfortable to use, and is almost identical to the 64's. A friend at work was looking at my new find, and said, "Oh, it has one of the old keyboards." He was referring to the layout, which would be different to an IBM user (unless they use XT's), while a Commodorephile would feel right at home. While the cursor key layout of the Tandy is in a row on the top of the keyboard (like the 128), the NEC (which I own) has a box-layout like the Plus/4, which I prefer.

The built in software varies a bit on these models, but they all seem to have three core programs dubbed BASIC, TEXT, and TELCOM. TEXT, has basic features that you'd expect, but nothing more. You get word-wrap, text cutting and pasting, and a search function. This suits me just fine, as any advanced functions (like spell checking and formatting) can be taken care of at home when I

(Continued on page 5)

after hours and stole--are you ready for this?--the bank's video camera. While it was recording. Remotely. (That is, the videotape recorder was located elsewhere in the bank, so he didn't get the videotape of himself stealing the camera.)

(Location Unknown): A man successfully broke into a bank's basement through a street-level window, cutting himself up pretty badly in the process. He then realized that (1) he could not get to the money from where he was, (2) he could not climb back out the window through which he had entered, and (3) he was bleeding pretty badly. So he located a phone and dialed "911" for help...

Jeff's note: This story was mutated. The man was actually stuck in a shaft and screamed for help.

Virginia: Two men in a pickup truck went to a new home site to steal a refrigerator. Banging up walls, floors, etc., they snatched a refrigerator from one of the houses, and loaded it onto the pickup. The truck promptly got stuck in the mud, so these brain surgeons decided that the refrigerator was too heavy. Banging up *more* walls, floors, etc., they put the refrigerator BACK into the house and returned to the pickup truck only to realize that they locked the keys in the truck--so they abandoned it.

(Location Unknown): A man walked into a Circle-K (a convenience store similar to a 7-11), put a \$20 bill on the counter and asked for change. When the clerk opened the cash drawer, the man pulled a gun and

Joke Digest Fills Your Emailbox — Ad Nauseum

by Jeff Jones. All the jokes in the black panels of this newsletter were emailed to me automatically through the joke of the week digest. I subscribed to Peter Bishop's digest a couple of months ago, and the jokes were slow to come, but when it rains it pours. When the service finally started I got 15 Emails of side-splitting text in one day. Now it's leveled off to one per week.

All you need is an address. Subscription is free for

anyone on the Internet, but you must be level of head and thick of skin. When it boils down to it, everybody is politically correct and is offended on their pet issues. Sooner or later you might take a joke personally. If you can't abide by the jokes, it's also free to unsubscribe.

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asked for all the cash in the register, which the clerk promptly provided. The man took the cash from the clerk and fled, leaving the \$20 bill on the counter. The total amount of cash he got from the drawer? Fifteen dollars.

UK: Some videos I saw recently, where robbers did not realize that the bank door opens one way. So on the raising of the safety screens they assumed that the doors locked too, until the next customer walks in unexpectedly. (one guy was seen to shoulder barge the door in desperation for 2 minutes).

MEN VS. WOMEN
(On Women First)
WOMANSPEAK
TRANSLATED TO
MAN'S REALITY

"You want" means
"You want"

"We need" really
means "I want"

"It's your decision"
really means "The
correct decision
should be obvious by
now"

"Do what you want"
really means "You'll
pay for this later"

"We need to talk"
really means "I need
to complain"

"Sure... go ahead"
really means "I don't
want you to."

"I'm hungry" really
means :
(a) Make me some-
thing to eat.
(b) Stop what you are
doing, scrape to-
gether your last \$5,
and go drive across
town and get me
something to eat. I
don't care if what you
are doing is impor-
tant.

BASIC To ML Is Easy Part 1: FOR NEXT LOOPS

by Jeff Jones. This column is for beginning ML programmers who want to write more complex ML. One of the best ways to write machine language programs remains the BASIC program. By hacking out your logic in BASIC first, you actually create a working outline. If the BASIC algorithm works, it's only a matter of time before you translate it to an ML version. LOADSTAR's presenter wouldn't be possible without this process.

In this process the programmer becomes a human compiler by taking a BASIC program and compiling it manually, line-by-line, into machine language. The hardest part of learning ML is getting used to your assembler, not this.

In this series, I'll take you through common BASIC practices and make them into ML right here in my word processor. Let's start with a simple program that reverses the order of everything on the screen so that what's at the home position is in the bottom right corner and visa versa. Here's the BASIC code:

```
10 for i = 0 to 499
20 swap=peek(2023-i)
30 poke 2023-i,peek(1024+i)
40 poke 1024+i,swap
50 next
```

This is simple code. the ML code may appear on more lines, but it's no less simple, and it will operate thousands of times faster. I could do this in a much more direct efficient way, incrementing up and down with no math, but I'm staying true to translation — and it's still fast.

For line 10 we have to set i to zero so we can count to 499.

```
Line10  lda #0
        sta Ivar
        sta Ivar+1
        ldy #0
```

1024 and 2023 are hard coded. No need for variables in ML either.

```
Loopmath lda Ivar
        clc
        adc <1024
        sta 251
        lda Ivar+1
        adc >1024
        sta 252
```

```
        lda <2023
        sec
```

```
sbc Ivar
sta 253
lda >2023
sbc Ivar+1
sta 254
ldy #0
lda(253),y
sta swap
Line30  lda(251),y
        sta(253),y
Line40  lda swap
        sta (251),y
Line50  lda Ivar
        clc
        adc #1
        sta Ivar
        lda Ivar+1
        adc #0
        sta Ivar+1
        lda Ivar+1
        cmp >500
        bcc LoopMath
        lda Ivar
        cpx <500
        bcc LoopMath
        rts
```

Enter this code, and in a fraction of a jiffy, the screen is upside down. In BASIC< it would be quite slow, even compiled. Use subroutines for nested loops and call each nested loop by name. This makes your main loop smaller, and you avoid branch out of range errors. ☐

C= Laptop Companion continued

(Continued from page 4)

dump the file to my favorite word processor, The Write Stuff.

Another neat feature of TEXT is that it stores everything you type into RAM, right down to the last character. This way, if the power dips or turns off, your file is still secure. My unit will sometimes turn off when jostled (must be a loose connection somewhere), but my file is always just as I left it. This feature makes for a secure feeling.

TELCOM is a simple but effective terminal program, the key to transferring your files to your Commodore. All the Tandies come with internal 300 baud modems (my NEC has an external one), but don't use them, as they are slow and a real pain to try to connect to your Commodore. These portables are all fitted with a universal RS-232c interface that will send data over a null-modem cable right to a similar interface on your computer.

This transfer requires you

to get one of these interfaces, as well as a null modem cable with the proper connectors, and a terminal program. I used a SwiftLink, and a cable that I built by following instructions in the SL's manual. I then boot Dialogue 128 (DesTerm and Novaterm should work as well), adjust some configure settings, and whatever I type on my portable, is printed on my 128's monitor. To dump a text file created with TEXT, I simply open the buffer on the Dialogue side, and uploaded my text file

Using TWS To Convert Garbage Into Text

by Jeff Jones. The Write Stuff is a powerful word processor. After I get a file from the Internet or from a PC disk, TWS has all of the tools I need to convert and salvage the text.

First TWS offers ASCII<>PetASCII conversion to fix Commodore's mistake of making the C-64 speak a different language from other evolving computers in the same age for no good reason that I can fathom. TWS128 80-col reads any file from the file requester and then asks you how you want it translated. With the C-64 version, you have to keep track of which mode you're in. If you're going to read in a PetASCII file and want to convert it to screen code (TWS' native mode), you have to press CTRL and then A to make sure you see ASCII at the bottom of the screen. Next you LOAD the file and press CTRL then A again. This converts to screen code.

TWS handles ASCII files from PCs, online and other computers the same way except that you must hold down the A key until conversion is done.

There are plenty of times

you see garbage on the screen. TWS is the only word processor I know of that allows you to search for garbage and replace it with useful text or separators. You may have to search your graphics keys, but you can type anything into the search & replace.

Reverse backarrows, ␣, are easy to search for and replace with unreversed arrows, ␣.

Press CTRL then S or CMDR+S and you'll see the prompt, *Search For:*

Press CTRL again. Now anything you type will be reversed. Type ␣ and it appears reversed. Press RETURN and you get the prompt, *Replace with:*

Press ␣ and press RETURN. TWS then goes through your text, changing all your reversed back arrows to back arrows (carriage returns for TWS).

Whenever you see garbage or garbage patterns, remember that you can search for characters and replace them with nothing. More importantly if you see that you've made a mistake, pressing ␣ stops the search and replace process

in its tracks.

Sometimes you have a file that's full of carriage returns, and you only want carriage returns at the end of paragraphs. LOADSTAR's t.files are like this. TWS 128 can fix this automatically with some files. TWS 64 users can do it in a few steps.

1. Move to the top of the file and change all double carriage returns to %%

2. Move to the top of the file and change all carriage returns followed by a space to &&.

3. Move to the top of the file and change all carriage returns to spaces.

4. Move to the top of the file and change all &&s to carriage return+space.

5. Move to the top of the file and change all %% to ␣␣.

At this point your processing of this text should be minimal. The reason for the %% and the && is that you want to get rid of carriage returns, but not all carriage returns, so the ones that are separating paragraphs or heralding the indentation of a new paragraph must first be preserved in a form that will be passed over when you change all carriage returns to SPACES. ☐

"I'm not upset" really means "Of course I'm upset, you moron."

"You're ... so manly" really means "You need a shave and you sweat a lot."

"You're certainly Attentive today." really means "Is sex all you ever think about?"

"This kitchen is so inconvenient." really means "I want a new house."

"The car is empty" really means "Go fill it up"

"The trash is full" really means "Take it out"

"The dog is barking" really means "Go outside in your underwear and see what is wrong"

"Hang the picture there" really means "NO, I mean hang it there!"

"I heard a noise" really means "I noticed you were almost asleep."

"How much do you love me" really means "I did something today you're really not going to like."

"I'll be ready in a minute" really means "Kick off your shoes and find a good game on T.V."

"Is my butt fat?" really means "Tell me I'm beautiful."

"You have to learn to communicate." really means "Just agree with me."

"It's all right, dear." really means "You'll pay for this."

Jim Butterfield Continued

(Continued from page 2)
When was the lawsuit instituted? A few more specific answers may enable me to find the case on Westlaw.

Don't think any such case ever hit court. So far, lacking specific information, I have yet to find any legal information concerning that situation I've just described. ☐

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64 DISK CONNECTION

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"Yes" = "No"
 "No" = "No"
 "Maybe" = "No."

"Do you like this?"
 really means "It's
 easy to fix so you'd
 better get used to it."

PROPERTIES OF MAN

SYMBOL: D1C

DISCOVERER:
 Anonymous (wouldn't
 you be)

ATOMIC MASS: 60-
 200kg - Very Dense
 matter

OCCURRENCES:
 Everywhere but espe-
 cially at scenes of
 destruction, violence,
 catastrophe etc.

PHYSICAL PROPER- TIES:

1. Surface usually covered in coarse hair
2. Boils at low values- highly flammable and excitable
3. Melts if overactivated
4. Bitter and foul
5. Found in various states from hard core to very dense matter
6. Does not Yield - high strain/stress factor

CHEMICAL PROPER- TIES:

1. Has great affinity for self
2. Absorbs great quantities of organic matter
3. Renowned for violent explosions
4. Insoluble in liquids, but activity decreases in saturation of alcohol
5. most powerful waste agent and good for boring applications

COMMON USES:

1. None of importance
2. Can be a great aid to each other
3. Very effective in arousing violent activity

Purists Bash The LOADSTAR LETTER & My Pic

by Jeff Jones. A few people called and Emailed that the image of me appeared a bit soft and retouched. That's because it was a romantic photo of me and my wife. In the full picture we appear inside of a wine glass (one of those effects from the late 80s). I can assure all readers that in person I am even more gorgeous than in the image.

I was told to stop the Amiga, MAC and PC articles. Let me state once and for all: there are **NO PC, AMIGA OR MAC ARTICLES IN THE LOADSTAR LETTER!** It seems there is nothing I can do to get rid of this impression. I wish the people who say this would try *reading* the LOADSTAR Letter.

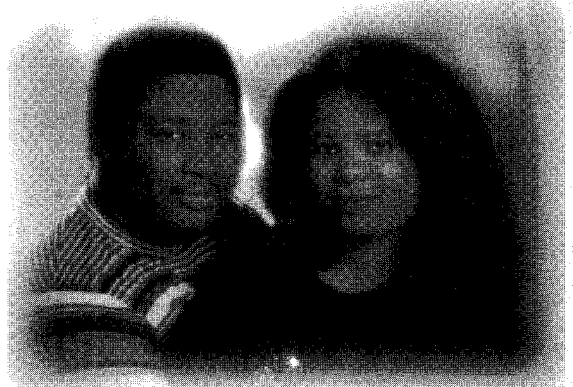
Internet coverage does *not* = PC or Mac. The net is for all of us, and is where the most 8-bit action is. When Qlink died, that's where most of the online people went.

I got about three letters and calls about my blatant hypocrisy for daring to employ my Amiga or my PC for LOADSTAR LETTER or LOADSTAR use. One Commodore aficionado wrote: *Hypocrisy: LOADSTAR Letter is*

not done on a C=64 or 128 computer. It is done wholly or partly on Jeff's Amiga and other non-Commodore 64/128 platform software and computers. This is dumb. We all know that the C=64/128 does not have the super graphic reproduction that the non C= CPU platforms have. So what! If you are going to write about C=64/128, the least you can do is use the machine. You preach C=64, but don't use it for the LOADSTAR LETTER...

I'm a photographer.

Photo editing is one of those things you can't do on a C-64, and most Amigas or PCs. 99% of the IBMs at Softdisk choke on the kind of work I do. I use my PC for my photo business, and happen to *already* have all the layout tools I need to produce the newsletter. If anyone wants to *buy me* a super C-64 system for home, I'll gladly accept the \$1600 in cash. I work *all damn day* on a C-64, and can say safely that the only person in the world who has logged more hours on a C-64 is Fender Tucker. I



make most of my money on a C-64, but make ends meet with my PC. It's how pretty lady and me feed the kids. It's my *other* job.

The thing that kills me is that I never heard this kind of talk about *Run, Ahoy, Commodore Magazine, Commodore World*, etc., all of which weren't produced on C-64s. Most magazines are done on Macs, but you *never* hear PC users complaining about it. Commodore users should worry about content instead of which computer printed an insert. I want constructive criticism, not nitpicking. ☐

Scott speaks Conclusion

(Continued from page 1)
 quite fast. All this was done in my spare time, of course, leaving little time for other interests. It was a labor of love, that now extends to this publication, which I'll write for, but no longer have to publish. That falls upon Mr. Jones. Anyway, I'm happy to be aboard. I've been given some assignments by Jeff which I'll write about. I also have my own ventures like intermediate hardware projects which have really intrigued me

as of late. I'm not talking about anything complex here, as I have zero electronics knowledge. While I may get no more than a sarcastic "Nice, dear" from my wife, I always get a "Cool!" from myself.

So I'm here to stay. I have a pretty good feeling that Jeff, myself, and any other contributors can make for a pretty good read. Remember, the LOADSTAR Letter is the only Commodore publication you're gonna get *every* month. ☐

PREPARE TO SHARE!
 NEXT MONTH LOADSTAR #148
 IS A PASS-AROUND ISSUE!
 IT WILL BE UPLOADED, COPIED
 AND SHARED ALL AROUND THE WORLD.
 TELL YOUR COMMODORE FRIENDS!
 COPY AN ISSUE!
 SPREAD THE WORD AND
 HELP US INCREASE OUR NUMBERS
 SO THAT WE MAY STAY WITH YOU LONGER



TESTS:

1. Fails all but most basic

2. Excellent specimen for single cell testing

HAZARDS:

1. Highly dangerous unless old specimen or surgically deactivated

2. Mixture with Higher level specimens (see element WOMEN") results in degeneration, making specimen easy to control.

3. Short lifetime of decay

C= Laptop Companion Continued

using the TELCOM program. The text transfers quickly, and can then be save in PetASCII format, ready to import into TWS.

Using TELCOM, a null-modem cable, and a SwiftLink, files can be sent at speeds up to 19,200 BPS. If you're not using SwiftLink, you can still make the transfer with another interface (such as the older Omnitronix, if you can find one), but speeds are limited by the computer itself. The 64 tops off at 2400 BPS, and the 128 at 9600.

If you have to lug a computer around, it should be as small and lightweight as possible while still being usable, right? Well, these babies really fit the bill, being the lightest laptops around. These portables

can last 20 hours on 4 AA batteries. Compare that to 2-5 hours with one of those heavy NiCads used in modern laptops. I realize as I write this that these little beauts are ideal for anyone who writes. The size and portability of these units is perfect for those writing short subjects such as stories and *newsletter articles*.

I thought you'd like to know about them. Like other technology cast by the wayside, these computers can find new life with the Commodore owner.

The trickiest part may be just locating one of these computers. If you're on the Internet, your best bet would be to check out the comp.sys.Tandy newsgroup, where I've seen a few for sale around \$100. If you can find someone locally who

wants to get rid of theirs, you should be able to get a better price. I got mine for a mere \$20 from a co-worker who really didn't know what they had.

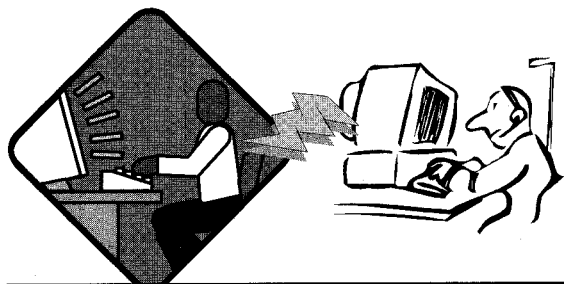
If you get one without a manual, or just want more information, there is an excellent web site with all kinds of useful info about these machines. <http://www.kippvisual.com/pages/comp/m100/m100Main.html>

I know I'll get a lot of mileage out of my NEC, and know you can too—if you get the chance to do so. While they may not be the LCD laptops that Commodore never released, they are the next best thing. We, as Commodore users, should be aware of their potential usefulness. ☐

LOADSTAR LETTER

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100% Electronic! Scott Eggleston and Jeff Jones collaborate over the Internet to produce this newsletter, never using snail mail for any article!

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